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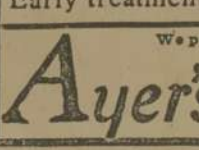
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NELLIE STEWART'S TEST
 By CHARLES A. HARTLEY

An appalling crash of thunder caused Wallace Gordon to pull up his restless team sharply and take stock of the situation. He had been conscious, in a way, for the previous hour that a heavy downpour of rain was beating on the top and sides of his snugly closed vehicle, but up to that moment he had not realized the serious side of it.
 "By George!" he exclaimed. "This looks bad—deuced bad. A little more of it and there will be all sorts of trouble!"
 He pulled back the team to a semblance of order and went on under the whip, lurching through broad pools and muddy rivelets which were breaking across the highway in many places. He had been on a 40-mile drive that day and was returning with a mind ill at rest. The evening before he had called on the winsome, but old-fashioned Nellie Stewart for a final answer to his petition of love. Miss Nellie was not old-fashioned in appearance by any means, but she had aggravatingly old-fashioned ideas about the continuation of love when once pledged, as her impetuous young lover had put it a hundred times in his solitary drive.
 "Wallace, dear," she had said on parting, "give me just 24 hours more. I must be absolutely sure on every point. If we do marry it must not be for a month, a year or half a lifetime, but for all time. Now, away down in your heart, dear," looking steadily into his eyes, "do you think that you could continue to love me when I am old, faded, withered—love me as you do now—as I know you do?"
 "I do."
 "I know it is extremely selfish of me to be so exacting when I can do no more myself than give you my sacred word that I shall be loving and faithful to the end as I require of you; somehow I think I know myself—but," she broke off with a quaver.
 In a moment she had recovered and



There Was a Renewal of the Storm's Fury.

was smiling up at him. "Come back this time tomorrow evening," she said, "and then I will be able to give you my answer one way or the other."
 Gordon was on his way back when the crashing storm had interrupted his train of thought. He was within two miles of home now and the girl of his affections lived a mile off, at right angles on a beautiful country lane.

"Heaven help me!" he muttered, saving at the lines in an attempt to keep the horses' heads pointed in a homeward direction. "This is a cloud-burst and the bridge will not stand another five minutes."

He attempted to send the horses ahead with lash and harsh commands, but the poor beasts knew the danger ahead better than did their distracted master and they dashed from the road toward higher ground. In an open field. As the team came around, facing the raging waters, Gordon caught a glimpse of a figure at the extreme entrance to the bridge. The horses were still plunging, but in a moment he had them nearer the bridge and could make out that the person was a woman. She was standing on the guard rail clinging to an upright post while the angry waters leaped and bounded hungrily at her feet. She was calling for help, but the roar of the waters drowned her words to a mere jumble.

Gordon's first impulse was to spring from the buggy, breast the water, already shoulder high, and running like a sea across the space at the approach to the bridge, and lend whatever aid he could to the woman; but before he could get his feet clear of the robes and trappings and spring out, there was a crash, followed by a scream, and the old bridge toppled from its foundations and floated away, at first hesitatingly and then swinging to mid-stream gained momentum and in a moment was racing with the raging torrent. An immense pile of driftwood had struck it near the middle and it was gone before Gordon could realize what had happened. For a second he remained stricken into inaction. When the structure had fallen from its supports and buoyantly come to the surface after the first plunge, he saw the woman still clinging to the post. She seemed to have

remained on the top side of the destroyed structure and as yet had not suffered greatly.

The team was sent flying down a side road parallel with the stream. In five minutes Gordon was abreast of the swiftly floating bridge. He leaned out and called at the top of his voice: "Hold fast; I'll get you off somehow."

The woman feebly waved a hand to signify that she had heard him. The team went on at the speed of the wind. Half a mile down stream he jerked his horses to a sudden stop and sprang out on the spongy sod. A hundred yards above the bridge had become entangled in a tree top and was swinging out of the main current toward shore. It paused dizzily in an eddying circle. Gordon could see the woman in the same position that she had at first occupied. He looked about for material for an improvised raft. Nothing was in sight and he was about to pull off his coat and swim to the rescue when the bridge again swung out and went on.

Gordon sprang back to his vehicle and followed in pursuit, calling as he went: "Keep up your courage; there is still hope!"

A half mile farther on, the bridge grounded against an island of bushes on a slight elevation. In a moment it swung shoreward and came to a dead stop. Gordon could see the woman lying face downward across the rough timbers. He plunged into the seething waters a hundred yards above with the determination to reach the wreck-age. He had given himself that distance as a leeway against being beaten down by the current. Wading obliquely with the current he was soon waist deep, then shoulder deep in the tumbling, drift-laden waters. He kept his feet with difficulty and was in the act of taking a long breath for the final plunge when a section of board fence floated against him. He grasped it with both hands and braced himself to stop it. It swung in below him and bobbed lightly in the less agitated water. Clinging to the raft with one hand and holding onto some bushes with the other he looked about. He had his raft but he lacked means of propelling it. Looking up and down, he saw a long fence-stake floating nearer shore. Pulling the raft to where the water was less than knee deep, he secured the stake, stepped on the raft and pushed out, poling with all his might. The raft carried him safely enough but was being swept down by the current so rapidly that he feared he would miss the bridge. Setting the end of the pole in the softened earth, he braced himself and sent the frail craft forward at good speed. He was within a few yards of the end of the bridge and was floating by at an alarming rate of speed. Once more he thrust the pole down. His heart almost stopped for he could not reach bottom. At that instant there was a scraping sound at his feet and he saw the top branches of a sapling raking by. Dropping the pole he clutched one of the branches and lying flat on the raft he held on with set teeth. The shock of the sudden stop almost tore the flesh from his hands. Gradually the strain slackened and the raft swung against the bridge. He shifted his position quickly and grasped one of the bridge timbers. The next moment he was standing on the bridge. The raft was pulled up sufficiently to prevent it from washing away.

Gordon then sprang toward the woman. "Poor old soul," he exclaimed, stooping over her. She wore a sunbonnet, which had become wet and hung over her face, hiding her features. A faded shoulder shawl had slipped up about her neck, while a cheap calico dress clung about her drenched form. All this Gordon saw at a glance as he stooped to raise the limp body.
 "She's probably some poor old grandmother," Gordon said half aloud as he staggered along with the body in his arms toward the raft. Placing her on one of the planks with her head lying on one of the posts which served as a cross-section to the raft, he pushed off, grasping the tops of bushes here and there to start him shoreward. Then grasping his pole he worked frantically until the raft was safe, in shallow water. Jumping into the water waist-deep, he picked up the woman and waded ashore. Reaching a grassy plot he gently lowered her to the ground, and pulling back the wet folds of the bonnet, which had concealed her face up to that time, he looked at the still face. Staggering back with blanched face, he cried: "My God, it is Nellie!"

At first he fell to chafing her hands and calling her name imploringly, then springing to his feet he ran to the buggy for the lap robes. Wrapping her in them he hurried with her to the buggy and lifted her in the best he could. He grasped the lines with one hand and steadied her with the other. The heads of the horses were turned toward the Stewart home.

They had not gone a hundred yards before the girl shuddered and otherwise manifested symptoms of returning consciousness in response to the lover's agonizing appeals to her to speak.
 "Oh, Wallace, can you ever forgive me?" she whispered when she could speak. "Oh, what a foolish, foolish thing I did!"
 He pressed her closer.
 "I was going to test your respect for old age."
 "I come out in these poor clothes to meet you and I expected somehow to find a way in the guise of a poor, old woman to test you without being found out. Then the storm came and I was caught in the bridge."
 For a moment there was silence. Then, Gordon asked: "Nellie, do you still doubt me?"

"No," was the faint whisper near his ear. "Now, I doubt only myself."

THE IMELIGHT

HITCHCOCK IN EUROPE TO GET DESERVED REST



FRANK H. HITCHCOCK, postmaster general, has gone to Europe to get a short rest. He deserves it. When a man, in the short length of time that Mr. Hitchcock has been in office, cuts down a postal deficit from \$18,000,000 to \$10,000,000, to use round numbers, he has worked hard enough to earn recreation. This is the accomplishment of Mr. Hitchcock and no one will begrudge him all the rest he can take during the hot months. He said when he left that he expected to be gone only a few weeks, so he'll be back at his desk before long fighting that deficit again.

To look at Hitchcock a person wouldn't think he ever would get tired. He's a six footer and built like an athlete. He's not only built like an athlete, but he once was one of no mean ability. He was the champion heavy-weight boxer at Harvard. But the strongest of men sometimes get tired and Mr. Hitchcock is like the rest of us.

Had Frank H. Hitchcock chosen to be a pugilist—his sensitive nature prohibited even such a thought—it is likely that he would have been the champion. He had the size, the strength, the skill, and, best of all, the intellect.

A story has been told of a bout that came off at the White House one day and as it never has been denied, although Mr. Hitchcock, even with his closest friends, has refused to discuss it, it is repeated here.

Everybody knows that Theodore Roosevelt is no slouch with the gloves. He is a scrapper of the Tom Sharkey type and likes to slug.

One day Hitchcock was at the White House on business and President Roosevelt invited him down to the gymnasium in the basement. The president tossed a pair of gloves to Hitchcock and said: "Put 'em on." At the same time he drew on another pair. Mr. Hitchcock peeled off his coat and vest and followed orders.

In a minute the president of the United States and the then assistant postmaster general were at it. Roosevelt didn't like it because Hitchcock was using only slight taps.

"Hit," he shouted. "Knock me out if you can."

Again Hitchcock obeyed orders of his chief. Smash! went a straight jab on the presidential face. "Bully," grunted Roosevelt. "You can't do it again." Bing! A right swing staggered the president.

"I guess that's enough," exclaimed Roosevelt. "I can't afford to be going around with a black eye. But if I were not the president I'd like to fight this out with you."

"Any time you say, Mr. President," replied the obliging Mr. Hitchcock.

LOEB MAY GO BACK TO ALBANY AS GOVERNOR



IF William Loeb Jr. runs for governor of New York and is elected he will return to the quarters at Albany where he once was a stenographer, but which he left as private secretary to the chief executive. Loeb started his public career as a stenographer in the general assembly of New York, became private secretary to several public officials, reporter of the New York constitutional convention and in 1894 district attorney. Next we find him a stenographer in the office of Governor Roosevelt. He attracted the attention of the future president and was made private secretary. He held this position until Roosevelt's term of governor expired and then became the colonel's secretary while Roosevelt was vice-president. When Roosevelt was made president upon the death of McKinley, Loeb followed him to the White House and after Mr. Cortelyou was appointed postmaster general Loeb became private secretary. In his term of office at the White House the title was changed from private secretary to that of secretary to the president.

There have been many secretaries to presidents or private secretaries as you may wish to call them, but there have been few who had anything on Mr. Loeb.

It is doubtful if any other secretary had such tasks to perform as were those set by Roosevelt for his aid.

Loeb was an ideal buffer for a president. He had a knack of handling big matters quickly and expeditiously. If mistakes were made he could shoulder the blame in a flash and often did. He knew the men the president wanted to see and the ones he didn't and it was seldom that the wrong person got past him.

From the White House Mr. Loeb went to New York as collector of the

port. President Taft gave him the job. His work in that office is of such recent occurrence that little is necessary to be said.

Now Taft is said to want Loeb as governor of the Empire state. Politicians who were used to running things in New York until Hughes became governor want none of Loeb, for they know they cannot handle him: He has a will of his own and is not afraid to exercise it.

FERDINAND FIRST KING TO RIDE IN AN AEROPLANE



FERDINAND, King of Bulgaria, got his name into the newspapers the other day by taking a ride in an aeroplane. He now bears the distinction of being the first ruler to fly and in view of recent fatal accidents may be able to hold the honor for some time.

Aviation isn't safe yet and there's no telling when the aeroplane is going to buckle or the gas bag of a dirigible explode, so it's a safe conjecture that Emperor William of Germany, King George of England, King Alfonso of Spain and some of the other monarchs are not going to risk their royal heads in the air and put the affairs of their country in jeopardy just to go soaring among the clouds.

Imagine President Taft up in an aeroplane. To put it another way, imagine the aeroplane that would carry the 300 pounds of the chief executive of the United States. It's probable that Theodore Roosevelt would enjoy nothing better than a trip to the clouds. His daughter, Mrs. Longworth, is said to have expressed her eagerness to make a flight and may yet do so, but it's safe to say that the royal rulers of the empires across the pond are not going to follow the example of Ferdinand of Bulgaria, who at Harselle, near Liege, enjoyed the experience of flying twice around the Kiewit aerodrome on a machine piloted by Chevalier de Lamine.

When he started out with his son, Boris and Cyril, to watch the flights, his majesty had not the faintest intention of leaving terra firma, but after seeing the chevalier's exploits his natural enthusiasm and love of sport got the better of his discretion.

Ferdinand mounted the aeroplane with the chevalier and it rose gracefully and easily into the air, remaining up eight minutes and a half. After he came down the king said his experience had been a delightful one.

"I have never," he said, "experienced anything that made me forget affairs of state so completely. I shall do my best to introduce aviation into Bulgaria."

Some of the others would like to forget the affairs of state, but they will hardly take to the clouds for the purpose.

JUDGE LANDIS AGAIN AFTER TRUST MAGNATES



JUDGE KENE-JUDGE LANDIS of \$29,240,000 Standard Oil fine fame is at it again. This time it is the beef trust magnates for whom the federal jurist of Chicago has gone gunning. In instructing a grand jury a few days ago Judge

Landis as much as told the members to indict the individual packers.

Only a short time before the judge had sustained a demurrer to indictments against the corporations comprising the beef trust. Now it is Armour, Swift, Morris, et al. who have to look or they will find themselves charged with violating the Sherman anti-trust law.

No jurist on the federal bench is more vigorous than Judge Landis and it is probable that the packers would rather find themselves facing most any other man in court. Judge Landis is fair and above all honest, and he requires the same of all of his court officials. He has been known to fine a poor unfortunate in cases where there were extenuating circumstances the smallest amount possible and let them off just as lightly as he could, but where it is an old offender or a case requiring drastic action he is just as quick to apply the full penalty of the law.

Prices of meat are of interest to every man, woman and child in the country, and if it is found that there has been any conspiracy to increase the cost, the grand jury indicts and a trial jury finds the magnates guilty. Judge Landis may be depended upon to do the rest.

Looks That Way.
 "I'm afraid that hard is a schemer."

"How now?"

"He's advertising for a young man with \$500 to learn the poetry business."